

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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A DRAWN GAME.

BY BASIL.

AUTHOR OF "LOVE THE DEBT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV. GRACE GRITTS INTERVIEWED.

MRS. JOHN was precipitate, perhaps, in her interpretation of Geoffrey Guard's letters to poor Tom's mother. That the letters were Geoffrey Guard's was unquestionable, and it was equally unquestionable that they were written to a woman with whom he had gone through a form of marriage. But, as even the Rev. John suggested, the marriage might have been invalid. It was not probable that the man, however hard pressed and reckless, would run his neck into the noose of bigamy for the sake of the second wife's fortune. Yet Mrs. John leaped at once to this conclusion, in the teeth of her abhorrence of its consequences.

The fact was, she had other evidence in her memory which confirmed that of the letters. She had been Archie's mother's dearest friend, and the confidante of all her troubles—but one. There was one Bluebeard chamber into which even she was not allowed to look, though she was allowed to know of its existence. Again and again had poor Mrs. Guard hinted to her of some incommunicable sorrow, which, like the rest of all her troubles, had been brought upon her by her husband, whom she had, nevertheless, worshipped. Mrs. John felt that now at last she had come upon the secret of this sorrow, and was thus predisposed to accept, as conclusive, evidence which was only very strong.

Before, however, she could act upon this evidence in the unbusinesslike way she had suggested to the Rev. John, Dr. Grice appeared. Having heard from

Mrs. John of Archie's illness, he had hurried off to see him, and became, of course, not merely medical, but legal adviser to his old friend. He had, besides, evidence of his own to give, since the Rev. John had got him to attend Mrs. Chown in her confinement, and he had some reasons for vividly remembering the case. It was impressed upon his memory, not merely by the ludicrous eagerness of the Rev. John for the instantaneous baptism of the baby, but also by the curiously marred beauty of the mother. She was very pretty, but had the most strangely contrasted eyes, one light blue and the other dark brown.

"Was she a lady, doctor?" asked Mrs. John.

"I think not; I should say, certainly not. Did she tell you that the writer of the letters was her husband, and the father of the child?" addressing the Rev. John.

"It was the last thing she said before she died. She asked me to keep the letters for the boy, as they might one day help him to find his father."

The doctor again compared the two sets of letters. There could not be the faintest doubt that they had been written by the same person.

"She'd hardly die with a lie on her lips; but the marriage may have been irregular. We must make sure of that before you stir another step in the business. Where and when did it take place; let us see."

The letters bore neither address nor date, but the two were in one envelope, with the time and place of dispatch and delivery stamped upon it. It had been posted in Colston about four months before Tom's birth, and was delivered in a place called Browbridge, somewhere in the North Riding, addressed: "Mrs. Chown, care of Mr. Saul Easterbee, Red House, Browbridge, Yorks."

"That's her father," commented the doctor; "and her sister probably lives there now. A man with any tact could find the clue to the coil in half an hour's conversation with her, if she's alive. But it needs tact," he continued with a doubtful, or rather not a doubtful look at the simple and helpless Rev. John. "It needs tact; for, if the thing gets wind, it will defeat any negotiation of yours with Mrs. Tuck, should it be as you fear." Then, after a pause, he added decisively: "I shall go myself."

"You!" exclaimed Mrs. John.

"Yes, I. Why not?"

"But your patients——"

"I gave them a week's respite when I started. My dear Mrs. John, I merely took you on my way to town, where I've not a week's business, nor half a week's business to do. If I start at once for Browbridge, I shall be back here to-morrow evening, or the morning after at latest, and shall then have time enough and to spare for the little I have to do in London."

"I cannot decline your great kindness, doctor, for——"

"Tut, tut! Kindness! You're the last person who ought to charge any one with kindness. Besides, it's not kindness at all, but curiosity and vanity. I fancy I'm just cut out for this kind of detective business; I suppose because it's out of my beat. Is there a Bradshaw about, do you think?"

While Mrs. John went to look for a railway-guide, the Rev. John ventured hesitantly to suggest to the doctor that it was not their business to prove Archie illegitimate. But the doctor stoutly supported Mrs. John's idea of her duty. He was not, however, surprised that the Rev. John should differ from him, for he had an idea that parsons, from having to take so many things in a non-natural sense, acquired a kind of artificial conscience, which, like a diseased taste, could swallow what a healthy conscience would reject.

The doctor found a train which gave him time to eat something and to administer to Mrs. John such consolation as he could offer. He had not much hope of bringing good news back to her, and he did not think it wise to affect to be sanguine. The little, however, which he could say, he did say, to cheer her before he departed.

After a tedious journey he reached Browbridge late that night and put up at the best hotel in the town, The Black Bull. Before he went to bed he "heckled" the waiter on the subject of the Easterbee

family, and learned from him that the sole surviving representative in these parts of the family, a Mrs. Gritts—"Grace Gritts," as they called her—was as well known as the parson of the parish, though not so favourably. It was the current and charitable belief of her neighbours that she had poisoned her father for money and her husband for spite. He, the waiter, keeping well within the law, didn't say so, "for it warn't his business to say so, and them whose business it was, didn't say so neither. The crowner's jury found there was as much pison in t' inside of Job Gritts as would do for ten men; but whether she gev it him, or druv him to tak' it, they couldn't say, and the main of 'em was married men themselves." Where such experts feared to tread the waiter was not going to rush in. What he could say, however, of Grace Gritts without fear of responsibility or of contradiction was, that she robbed her sister of her share of their father's property—a matter of one thousand pounds and more—and then drove her out of the house and out of the place, no one knew where—on to the streets probably. Then she married for his money Job Gritts, an old man, but not so old as to escape having the little life left to him cut short by poison. And now she was the greatest miser in the country. She had heaps and hoards of money hidden away in the house, which was barred and bolted like a jail; and the only extravagance she indulged in was firearms, of which she kept a large assortment of all kinds loaded to her hand. Not that she feared robbers, for she hardly knew what fear meant, but she expected and was prepared for them. Indeed, only a desperate burglar would attempt the place, since it was not merely well fortified, but well garrisoned; for, though Grace lived in it alone, she was a woman of extraordinary strength, spirit, and resolution.

Such was the sum of the waiter's account of Grace Gritts. Of her sister he knew nothing, except the unsisterly treatment she received at the hands of Grace; but then, her sister belonged to an earlier generation than that of this young waiter of The Black Bull.

The doctor's curiosity was, as might be supposed, much piqued by this account of the graceless Grace, and he set out early next morning for the Red House with the expectation of an interesting, stirring, stormy, perhaps, interview with its mistress.

The Red House stood a quarter of a mile

outside the town in its own neglected grounds; for though Grace did the work of two men, it would have taken more than two men to keep the place in any order, and Grace both grudged the wages and feared the observation of hirelings. It was a dismal two-storey building of brick, every window blind with dirt and barred and cross-barred with stout rods of iron. Behind the house were half-a-dozen stark and starved trees, made gaunt by their branches having been hewed off for firewood; in front the potato-ridges came up almost to the doorsteps. At one side of the doorsteps was a dog-kennel, happily tenantless now; but in the generous days of youth Grace had kept a bulldog, which had died of starvation. Sometimes even now in her more genial moments she had thoughts of replacing him, and therefore the kennel had not been chopped up for firewood. On the other side of the doorsteps was a small manure-heap which Grace, in hours of relaxation, had gathered along the high-road. The door itself—there was but one, for the back-door had been bricked up—the door itself was not ruinous at all, but stout, sound oak, studded with nails, yet unadorned with a knocker, and unaccommodated with a bell. Therefore, the doctor had to knock with his umbrella, which he did with an apologetic gentleness, for he was determined to be soothingly polite. Instantly, and as though the doctor had touched a spring with the knob of his umbrella, a window over the door shot up. Hearing the sound he looked up into a wrathful and repulsive face, not haggard and hungry at all, but full, red, coarse, and heavy-looking, yet with a likeness in it, dim as a vague memory, to the pretty face of Mrs. Chown. The doctor politely raised his hat and began in a suave voice of conciliation.

"May I take the liberty, ma'am——"

"Nay, yo'll tak' no liberties wi' me, my mon," shutting down the window with the vicious snap of a guillotine.

The doctor blinked, confounded for a moment, as he stood looking up, hat in hand; then he replaced his hat, and shook with laughter. Certainly the bald head, bearded lips, and gross and grimy face of the woman made her retort seem to him somehow not apt. Having recovered himself a little, he meditated for some moments in perplexity about his next step. At last a happy thought occurred to him. Feeling certain that the ogress would keep her eye upon him till he was well off the pre-

mises, he walked down the steps and down the narrow path a little way, then stooped and affected to pick up a coin, which he rung on a stone first, and tested then with his teeth. Immediately the window shot up again, and the screechy voice screamed:

"That there's noan yourn."

"Eh?"

"Yon piece o' brass thee's sammed up* is noan o' thine. Aw belang it,† aw reckon."

"Then you'll know what it is."

"Aw kens who belongs it. If it wor thine thee'd noan need to test it."

"It's mine till I find the owner of it."

"Yo've fun' her nah, aw tell thee."

"I don't know that I have."

"Aw'll mak' thee knaw it, then. Aw'm noan bahn to be robbed by the likes o' thee."

"Robbed! I came merely to tell you that your sister, Mrs. Chown, is dead, and left—— Nay, you may just find it all out for yourself. Robbed, indeed!"

"Left! Stay; ye munnot goa. Aw'll be dahn in a wink. Dunnot goa. Aw'm a bit hasty," breathlessly.

Then she hurried headlong downstairs, but took some time, in the nervousness of her intense eagerness, to undo all the bolts of the door. At last she appeared upon the steps, the most singular and forbidding figure the doctor had ever seen.

"Coom in, wilt ta, an' sit thee dahn? Aw'm sorry aw spak' a bit rough, but aw took thee for t' road-rate."

Then she led the way into the kitchen, where a wretched fire was blinking feebly, lost in one corner of the grate.

"There, sit thee dahn," handing him the only chair in the place, rush-bottomed, rickety, and black with age and dirt. "Yo war' sayin' that my sister, Mrs. Chown, died and left summut."

"You are her sister?"

"Aye, aw'm her sister reet enough, an' all the kin shoo had aboon grand."

"She married a Mr. Chown—a Mr. Geoffrey Chown?" proceeded the doctor with quite a lawyer-like caution and formality.

"Shoo did; aw wor at the weddin' mysen."

"Then if you are her sister, and were at the wedding, you can tell me when and where they were married," looking sharply up at her, as though he doubted her statements.

* "Sammed up"—i.e. picked up.

† "Aw belang it"—i.e. it belongs to me.

"For sewer aw can. Shoo wor wed in Browbrig regëster-office, aboon twenty years sin. Nay, aw can tell thee date to a day."

Then, casting a searching glance round the kitchen, and taking up half a loaf and a cracked bowl of coarse brown sugar from the table, lest he might help himself to them in her absence, she left the room.

Presently she returned, bearing in one hand an old family Bible, and in the other a faded and shattered photographic album. In a blank page of the Bible she showed, among other entries, that of the marriage of Geoffrey Chown to Charlotte Ann Easterbee, with the date of the wedding, of which the doctor took mental note. In the tattered album was a photograph, taken on the wedding-day, of the bride and bridegroom, the groomsmen and the bride's sister—a ghastly group.

"Yon's Chown, and that's my sister next him. You knew her, happen*? Him in the white waistcoat is Chown's friend—Smart, they called him—and that's me behind."

The doctor recognised at once Guard in the bridegroom, and his former patient in the bride.

"Yes, I knew her. She had something peculiar about her eyes."

"Shoo had. They didn't braid off aich other. Won wor brahn and t'other blue. An' soa shoo's dead. Aw thowt she mun be. An' shoo left summat?" looking with greedy anxiety into his face.

"She left—but I am not satisfied that you are the proper person to have it."

"An' who's a better reet to it than her own lawful sister, aw'd like to know. What wor it, onyhow?"

"It was a baby. She left a baby. You would like to have it?"

"Nobbut† a bairn?" in a scream.

"No; only a baby."

Do what he could, the doctor was unable to help smiling at the blank expression of disappointment and disgust in her face. Seeing the smile, it at once occurred to her that she had been taken in in some way. She was not long in imagining how. As her mind was always running on her money, she felt sure that the doctor was keeping her in parley downstairs, while some confederate upstairs was ransacking her treasures. In an instant she sprang

towards a loaded gun which stood in one corner of the fireplace, seized and cocked it. The doctor simultaneously sprang towards the door. She was too quick for him; before he reached it, she had gained it; but instead of facing and shooting him, as he fully expected, she sped past him and bounded upstairs like a tigress whose whelps were being carried off. The doctor, it need not be said, bolted with undignified speed, out of the house, through the garden, into the high-road, and for a quarter of a mile along it before he dared to stop for breath. Not till he had got to the out-skirts of the town did he recover spirits enough for a hearty laugh. Then, becoming suddenly serious, he muttered: "They laugh who win, but it's a Cadmean victory. However, I must make sure at the registry-office." Here he took out his note-book, and set down in it the date of the marriage as given in Grace's Bible.

Entering the town he found soon the office of the registrar, and, on furnishing him with the names and the date, got at once a stamped and certified copy of the entry. There was not the least doubt about the validity of the marriage. Unless, thought the doctor, Guard had married an earlier wife still, who was alive at his second marriage, but who died before his third, Archie must be illegitimate. This, however, to anyone who knew poor Geoffrey Guard, was not to be supposed; for a kinder-hearted man, and one less likely to play the part deliberately of a heartless Lothario, never lived. Nor did the doctor believe with Mrs. John that Guard had married either wife for money—not the first, for she had little or none, nor the second, for he was devotedly attached to her. He was, however, the weakest of the weak, and had in some incredible way, probably, drifted into each marriage before he well knew where he was.

This at least was the only plausible or possible explanation of his bigamy—for bigamist he was unquestionably—which presented itself to the doctor's mind.

SOME LONDON CLEARINGS.

IN passing from Cripplegate Church to Bunhill Fields, we seem to pass from one age to another; from the age of Milton to the age of Wesley; from the days of breast-plates and buff-coats, of stern-fighting Puri-

* "Happen"—i.e. perhaps.

† "They didn't braid of"—i.e. they were unlike.

‡ "Nobbut"—i.e. only.

tans, and old Ironsides, to the era of wigs and bands and Geneva gowns; from the rigid morals and unswerving faith of the former period, to the sentiment and feminine fervour and general uneasy palpitation of the eighteenth century. For here lie many of the Nonconformist worthies who had so great a share in the religious and intellectual movement of the century; here among this vast company that rest under the pale grey headstones in this desolate open spot, dark and gloomy in the glare of brilliant shops and brightly-lighted streets—dark and gloomy in spite of a chilly lambent glow that seems to rise from the thousands of tombs and headstones. A very crowd of headstones and tombs, like a flock of sheep pent in a fold with hardly room to move among them; a crowd that has a certain impressiveness about it, suggesting the crowd of witnesses in the old hymn. And yet the general aspect is of desolation and desertion, with the damp, chilly stones weather-beaten and decayed with the rank herbage, with the broad footpath, running across from street to street, which is paved with gravestones, and where the footsteps of passers-by, errand-boys with parcels, workmen with their baskets, women with bundles huddled up among their garments, and bands of roughs whooping and whistling shrill calls—where the footsteps of all these echo solemnly in the vaults below.

It is all a maze—a bewildering maze, while in the general cold glitter of the tombs from a patch of sulky sun-glimmer in the sky, the eye seeks in vain for some central object to rest upon. No temple, no spire, no solemn avenue of trees is there to crown the scene, and give unity to this forlorn assemblage of graves. And yet there is a central point of interest here if one could only discover it, for of all who visit this old Campo Santo, few there are who do not first turn to the grave of Bunyan; and, after all, the appearance of neglect and abandonment is on the surface only, for surely a constant succession of pilgrims year by year file past the tomb of him who wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress*; while from regions, even beyond those Caribbean seas where Robinson Crusoe is settled in his lonely isle, come those who recall the memories of childhood as they stand by the grave of Defoe. But it is all a maze, a maze without a plan and without a guide. We may as well turn away from the gloomy graveyard encompassed by the lowering mists and fogs of London, and seek the light, and life, and movement

of the busy streets. Happily, at this moment a guide presents himself, appearing suddenly from nobody knows where—one of the strangest-looking of mortals, who seems to have sprung from among the tombs. Whether he is some Old Mortality who delights in recalling the memory of the worthies who sleep round about, or is connected in some official way with the ground, does not appear; but, anyhow, he seems to know every inch of the Fields, and all this silent congregation of the dead.

With a commonplace guide half the interest of this strangely interesting place would be lost; happily our guide is by no means commonplace. From living long among the dead, he seems in some strange way imbued with their characteristics. How many eccentric souls have here found rest; and here is one of the band, who is still walking the earth! How many of the sturdy Puritan sort, who would bow the knee to no human power, have here passed into dust; and this might be one who has survived into this strange, unfamiliar age! And so we follow our strange guide, before whom yield the iron gates, and who brings us by a tortuous path among the graves to where John Bunyan lies, under a stately tomb. There in freestone effigy lies the great pilgrim with his book in his hand—a presence somehow familiar to us, although the features and salient parts, blurred and weathered by many winters, hardly give a notion of the vivid personality of the man as he lived; the tall, strong, burly man, with the ruddy face and sparkling eyes, his hair reddish, and even to the last only sprinkled with grey; such as he appeared on that rainy day, when, dismounting from his horse at his lodgings in Snow Hill after a tedious country journey, he felt the first throb of that fever which was to end his days.

Bunyan seems to us rather the countryman than the citizen. His pilgrims walk by miry ways, and over broad downs, where shepherds keep their flocks, through meadows, and across moorland wildernesses. If the author brings his pilgrims to a busy town, the townfolk are in a hubbub about them, and mock them; while the celestial city is only seen afar off. And yet in his later days Bunyan's figure was tolerably familiar in London. He preached regularly in Southwark—in an open space near the Falcon—and people thronged to hear him, so that he could count upon a regular congregation of some five hundred souls. John Wesley's father heard him preach on

Newington Green. That he had many friends in London is evident from the number of people who attended his funeral, and from the handsome tomb that soon after his death was built over his grave. Twenty or thirty years ago this tomb, which had fallen into decay, was restored, but has already assumed a time-worn, weather-worn appearance. Stone probably perishes more quickly in a London atmosphere than under any other conditions, and, looking round at the headstones and tombs, it is evident that at the end of fifty years or so, inscriptions, unless renewed in the meantime, are mostly illegible, while in country churchyards epitaphs of the last century, or of even earlier dates, are often easily to be deciphered.

While we have been examining Bunyan's monument, our strange guide has been marching up and down excitedly, shouldering his cane like a sentinel on guard, and muttering and gesticulating. At last he approaches and beckons one of our party aside. "Sir, I should like a word with you," very solemnly and mysteriously; and then he goes on in a low, sepulchral voice: "Five and a half acres of ground. Six thousand tombstones, and a hundred and twenty thousand bodies." Then he shakes his head, gloomily mutters, "You are a man, sir—so am I," shoulders his cane, and resumes his march. But apart from the mystery in which this information is wrapped, there is a good deal of interest attaching to its subject. Five and half acres of ground—and a glance at the extent of the cemetery shows that the estimate is hardly exaggerated—is a goodly space in the heart of this crowded London. But the six thousand tombstones give a stony and desolate air to what might be one of the green spaces of the City, especially those memorials of the dead which have ceased to speak in any way of those who lie beneath, and which, indeed, are rather mournful reminders of the forgetfulness of the living. And yet the memory of the army of the dead who lie here encamped seems to forbid any rude, sweeping change that would deprive the ground of its almost sacred character and associations. Let us here pause for a moment over the history of this great city of the dead.

Bunhill was probably Bonehill, and there may have been some ancient tumulus, or early cemetery, to give it the name. But the "Fields" themselves were much more extensive than the present cemetery. Once

they were a large open space, extending northwards to where the Grecian Theatre now stands in the City Road, near which spot, in one corner of the fields, stood the Doghouse, as it was called—the City kennels where the Lord Mayor's hounds were kept in the days when he hunted the fox in Bloomsbury, and killed a hare in the precincts of St. Giles-in-the-Fields. Now, according to Stow, in 1549—the City churchyards even then being overcrowded—more than a thousand cartloads of human remains were removed from St. Paul's to Bunhill Fields, not necessarily to our cemetery, for it would rather appear that these cartloads formed a mound of considerable size to the north, near the line of the City Road; a mound that was subsequently utilised as a fort in the line of ramparts thrown up by the Parliament in the civil wars for the defence of the city. Perhaps, after all, this mound was the original bone-hill from which the name Bunhill is derived. Close to this mound, in after years, were opened the pits for the burial of the dead at the time of the Great Plague. Hence, no doubt, the popular opinion that connected the Bunhill cemetery with the victims of the plague. And, indeed, it is a fact that the place was walled in and consecrated as a City churchyard at that very period, to provide for the decent burial of those who died of the plague, though it is doubtful whether it was actually used for that purpose. Indeed, there is some direct testimony that it was not. But from that time the enclosed burial-ground began to be used by the numerous and powerful Dissenting communities, which, from the time of the Restoration, had decisively severed themselves from the Church of England.

Much of the land outside the City walls was under the lordship of the Church; a great part of Finsbury, including Bunhill Fields, belonged to the church of St. Paul's attached to the prebend of Finsbury; but the City of London had obtained a lease of all this in the sixteenth century, and continued to hold it for more than three hundred years, when through some oversight or misunderstanding, the lease was not renewed in time, and the property was about to fall into the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Already, in 1852, the ground had been closed against interments and the registers removed to Somerset House; and it was feared that strict legal rights might be exacted, and the famous burial-ground converted into building lots. This desecration was, however, averted by

an Act of Parliament, passed in 1869, by which the ground was vested in the Corporation of the City of London, to be preserved as an open space and recreation-ground for the public benefit. As a recreation-ground, indeed, the Bunhill Fields figure in the list of public places of the kind. But this description must not be taken too literally. Any persons seeking recreation here must be prepared to take their pleasure sadly.

But our guide is waiting for us impatiently, still muttering and talking to himself, and every now and then dispersing small groups of boys who have assembled at the sight of people wandering about among the tombs. And then our friend leads us here and there, interjecting a name at one tomb or another, with the question, "Heard of him?" a question he answers himself in the same breath with a desponding shake of the head: "No, no; how could you? You're too young—you're too young." But, presently, with a triumphant gesture, he leads us to a square and solid-looking tomb, inscribed, "Richard Cromwell." "Heard of him? Protector for nine days, and his father for nine years. Ah, you've heard of him. He was a man, so are you, and so am I." Our friend is fond of reminding us of this common humanity, which is, perhaps, rather flattering when associated with such names as the Cromwells. According to local historians, Richard Cromwell, the whilom Protector, is buried at Cheshunt; still, it is quite possible that zealous surviving friends may have brought the body to London to lie among his father's friends and kinsmen. There is a tomb to Henry Cromwell, too, close by, and both of these were discovered seven feet below the existing surface level—a curious fact, and one that leads to the belief that many other memorials of the worthies of the seventeenth century may lie buried among subsequent accretions.

But of the Cromwellian period there are many well-known worthies here reposing, among others Dr. John Owen, chaplain to the Lord Protector, and Colonel Charles Fleetwood, whose first wife was Cromwell's daughter, with Colonel Blenner Haysett, "a lover of arms and of Christian and English liberties." Of a later period are a whole crowd of Independent divines, from the days of King James even, to those of Queen Victoria; of Presbyterians too, and Baptists, and Unitarians, a long catalogue of names, which our guide repeats in almost despairing accents, as not one of

them elicits a distinct flash of intelligence on our part. "You don't know him! How should you? You're too young." At length Dr. Isaac Watts, under a handsome square tomb, elicits a show of recognition. "Ah, you know him? 'How doth the little busy bee improve each shining hour.'"

But, alas! the hour is anything but shining—damp and lowering, on the contrary, and the long, dank grass, and the cold, grey tombs, inspire a longing to reach the terra-firma of the pavement again. Else we might have sought out the tomb of William Blake, memorable for his nightmare fancies with pencil and graver, and Stothart, of less eccentric fame. And here is the family grave of the Grimaldis—not that the celebrated Joe is among them, but the father of him, probably the one who in the Gordon Riots, when householders were obliged to write "No Popery" on their walls, under pain of wreckage by the mob, with comprehensive liberality chalked up "No religion at all!" which, as it happened, was taken in good part. And then our guide points out with a mysterious air a square, solid tomb, which seems to indicate as plainly as such an object can, family respectability and substance: "Henry Fauntleroy, banker, hanged for forgery. Heard of him?" Truly here was the family vault of the Fauntleroyes, but whether the banker lies here, or in Newgate, is a mystery we will not attempt to solve.

Here at last is the tomb of Defoe, perhaps, after Bunyan's, the one most generally sought by the general public. The monument itself is conspicuous from afar in the shape of a tall obelisk of modern days, that purports to have been erected by a subscription among the boys of England. But there is something curiously inappropriate in this solid memorial to the ingenious and versatile pamphleteer. Swift, indeed, never equalled in dexterous irony the Short Way with Dissenters, for writing which Defoe underwent a sort of triumph in the pillory, while, in its serious detail, it is hardly possible to match the True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal, a solemn mystification designed to work off surplus copies of Drelincourt on Death, remaining in the hands of a friendly bookseller. From the Family Instructor, to the fortunes and misfortunes of Moll Flanders, nothing came amiss to Defoe. Something "Queen Anne," and rococo, would have suited Defoe to a nicety in the way of a monument, with a

basso-relievo of Robinson chipping away at his big canon; but this Egyptian obelisk somehow crushes the imagination, and suggests only the Euston Road.

From Defoe we turn to another grave, that of John Dunton, his contemporary, and at times his associate, although the pair quarrelled fiercely and abused each other, after the fashion of the age. Dunton also was an author and prolific pamphleteer, but is to us principally known as bookseller and publisher. His interest to us centres in his connection with the Annesley family, whose records link the age of Milton and the age of Wesley in a very interesting way. Our young bookseller then, as he tells the story himself in his *Life and Errors*, attending one Sunday the chapel in St. Helen's where Dr. Annesley preached, was struck to the heart at the sight of the doctor's pretty daughters sitting all in a row in the high-backed minister's pew. Dr. Annesley lived in a solid, comfortable house just out of Spital Square, among the then open Spital Fields, to which he had removed from St. Giles's vicarage, a generous, noble-hearted man of fine, commanding presence, living in a free and hospitable manner, with quite a forest of olive-branches around him. Defoe has written his eulogy:

Solid, yet vigorous, too, both grave and young,
A taking aspect and a charming tongue,

while he thus alludes to his gentle birth and courtly connections:

Honour he had by birth, and not by chance;
And more by merit than inheritance.
As the gay world attacked him with her charms,
He shook the gaudy trifle from his arms.

Dr. Annesley's family responsibilities, however, were sufficiently heavy to account for his indifference to the gay world. It is recorded, indeed, that when the doctor's youngest child was brought to be christened by a brother divine, the latter queried how many this made; and was answered by another, "That he was not quite sure whether two dozen, or a quarter of a hundred."

To the father of twenty-five children the thriving young bookseller, with his solid dissenting connection—he had already published the works of worthy Mr. Doolittle, another citizen of our Bunhill necropolis—was not an unwelcome wooer for one of his many daughters, and Dunton himself, in his laced coat and ruffles, found favour in the eyes of one of the flock. In such a household, full of the stir of youthful

feelings, romance can hardly be wanting. Papa, that solid divine, sits in his high-backed chair and smokes his pipe solemnly—the great Nonconformist divines of the age are all great smokers—and discourses with the worthy Dr. Goodenough and others, and generally lays down the law on matters of faith and doctrine. But the girls about him, the Puritan maidens fresh and charming in the unruffled bloom of youth and innocence, do not receive all their impressions from papa. Passion and sentiment stir those dainty bosoms that perhaps throb fiercely enough beneath the snow-white kerchiefs. And neither Elizabeth nor her lover surely confined their reading to the treatises of Doolittle or Goodenough, but know something also of the sentimental romance of the day. Thus the pair are Philaret and Iris to each other, and when the good doctor pays his yearly visit to Tunbridge, to take the waters, with Elizabeth in his company, Philaret writes constantly to Iris in amorous, impassioned strain. As to which the Puritan maiden gently reproves him. "Please to deny yourself a little luxuriance in your letters," writes Iris, "lest my father should find them." But what is more strange, this impassioned strain is kept up after marriage. "My heart, and dearer," Philaret writes to Iris on his voyage to America. For soon after the wedding Philaret sails for America.

Some difficulties caused by "the universal damp upon trade, which was occasioned by the defeat of the Duke of Monmouth in the West," an expression which shows how deeply the trading classes and its dissenting community generally had ventured against the present government—Defoe, it will be remembered, shouldered a musket in the West, and one of Dunton's apprentices was missing after Sedgemoor fight—some difficulties thus arising, sent Dunton on a trading visit to America with a cargo of religious books, for which he seems to have found a ready sale in Boston. Having opened a store at Boston, where the name of the Rev. Cotton Mather, the minister, recalls the original Botolph's town among the flats of Lincolnshire and the voyage of the pilgrim fathers, Dunton visited Harvard College, and opened another store at Salem, being well received by all he visited, no doubt from his connection with Annesley, who was universally known and respected among the descendants of the Puritans. After Dunton's return from America, we find him opening shop again under his well-

known sign of the Black Raven, in the Poultry.

And here, among the writers employed by Dunton, we come across one Samuel Wesley, a Church of England clergyman, but of a good, stout, Puritan stock, of which another branch, expanding the family name, afterwards became famous as Wellesleys, and now adorns the peerage as Earls of Mornington and Dukes of Wellington. But Samuel Wesley at that date was nothing more distinguished than a bookseller's hack, although not without hope of preferment from distinguished friends. Wesley's connection with Dunton was probably the means of introducing him to the Annesley family, and he soon formed an attachment to one of the sprightly daughters of the house. Susannah, the twenty-fifth child of Dr. Annesley, and therefore the heroine of the christening story, was a clever, spirited girl, whose refined and delicate features, as they are shadowed forth in portraits taken towards the close of her life, give evidence of early personal charms. As often happens in large families, the younger branches, wholesomely neglected, perhaps, or at all events not overpowered by parental solicitude, developed a considerable freedom and independence of judgment. Susannah, for instance, before she was twelve years old, had made up her mind as to the unlawfulness of schism, and by a not unnatural reaction from her father's opinions, seems to have become quite an untameable little Tory, and thus the young Church of England divine had a certain advantage in the young lady's eyes over other competitors, and before long courtship terminated in marriage.

About this time Dunton had started a new adventure in the form of a bi-weekly sheet, called the *Athenian Gazette* or *Mercury*. It was *Gazette* in the bulk, but *Mercury* in the single numbers, for the singular reason that as *gaza* signified a treasury, the former title was more fitted for the collected volumes, while *Mercury* was better adapted to run to and fro among the coffee-houses in the form of single sheets. This journal purported to be the organ of the *Athenian Society*—a more or less imaginary assemblage of wits and men of letters, to which Jonathan Swift was attracted in the early part of his career, but which was practically composed of Dunton and Wesley. The *Mercury*, except for a few advertisements and notices of books, was made up of answers to correspondents on

every possible subject, moral, amatory, scientific, and religious; and designed, as the original advertisement expresses it, "To answer all manner of nice and curious questions"—often more curious than nice to our more fastidious taste—"in Divinity, Physic, Law, Philosophy, History, Poetry, Mathematics, Trade, and all other questions proposed by either sex." The journal took well at first, and brought the Athenians into considerable notoriety. But Dunton, in his intercourse with profane litterateurs and in his platonic philanderings with feminine correspondents, lost his hold of that steady dissenting clientèle that had hitherto supported him. Then Dunton's wife died, and with her vanished all the strength and success of his life. Probably Elizabeth Dunton also lies in Bunhill Fields; but there is no existent memorial of her, and the classic epitaph, not without merit, which Wesley wrote for his sister-in-law's tomb, probably was not destined to be there engraved. Wesley accompanied the epitaph with the tart observation, writing six months after Elizabeth's death, that "He hoped it might not be wanted for an epithalamium." The tartness was justified by the event, for, soon after the date of Wesley's letter, the sorrowing widower married again. From that time Dunton's life was passed in broils and ignoble squabbles, and he died in 1733 in poverty and obscurity, but full of schemes and projects to the last.

This brings us to the tomb of the youngest of the Annesley girls, to many the most interesting spot in all this field of the dead; a tomb well cared for, bright and cheerful-looking, over which grows a solitary weeping birch, rather stunted, it is true, from the slips and cuttings that have been gathered from it by pilgrims who come hither from far distant lands. This is the tomb of Susannah Wesley, the mother of John and Charles Wesley, and it may be said, also, the mother of Methodism itself. For it is the mother's spirit rather than the father's that seems to us to be embodied in this wonderful religious organisation. But between the days of Susannah's girlhood—in its fresh young life spent among the Spital Fields, and in the cosy society of snug City parlours—and her home-coming, as it were, to rest in the old City burial-ground so near the scenes of her youth, there is the story of a life to be told, of many lives indeed, sons and daughters growing up in the great barn-like rectory at Epworth. We see the

beginning and we see the end, and we can recall some mental picture of John Wesley preaching in the churchyard at Epworth, standing on his father's tomb. But we miss the link in the chain that brings back Susannah Wesley, in her venerable widowhood, to sleep among her old friends and kindred.

And then we are strangely reminded how the circle is completed. Our ancient guide has now led us to the extreme edge of the burial-ground, where steps lead down from this mound of sepulchre to the general level of the street. "Sir, I should like a word with you," the hermit hoarsely whispers, and then, with a wave of the hand, points out a square and solid-looking chapel, imposing from its size and bulk, while adjoining is a comfortable-looking red-brick house, where a spark of domestic life still exists, in the midst of shops and warehouses, indicated by blinds and curtains, and the soft glow of the domestic hearth. "I should like a word with you," repeats the ancient one of Bunhill Fields. "That chapel that you see over there is John Wesley's own chapel, and the house is John Wesley's house, and in yonder room, on the first floor, John Wesley died."

There is a dramatic fitness about this announcement, that rounds off our circuit of Bunhill Fields. All the more dramatic, too, in the surprise, for to us that great square chapel, with its minister's house in red-brick, had no more significance than any other building of the kind. But now the whole scene assumes a wondrous interest, as from the grave of Susannah Wesley we cross over to this Westminster Abbey of the Methodists, with its associations as one of the holy places of the faith; for in the quiet burial-ground at the back, is the tomb of John Wesley, while the room in which he died looks out upon the scene.

The history of the City Road Chapel, with its prosaic name and commonplace exterior, is connected in many curious ways with the history and growth of the neighbourhood. The origin of the chapel is to be sought in the pleasure-grounds of Moorfields, with their public walks and avenues, once enjoyed by quiet citizens and their families, but which in Wesley's time had become the resort of a less orderly crowd. Among this crowd Wesley began to preach, jeered at and mocked at first, but soon gaining the respect and attention of his audience. A

small dark man was Wesley, his hair evenly parted, with the neatness of the Oxford graduate, while his dress showed the care and precision of the episcopal divine. It is difficult to trace in his writings any evidence of the eloquence that moved the masses. Perhaps it was his exceeding friendliness, his sweetness of temper, and evident sympathy with his hearers that won the hearts of such multitudes. These meetings in Moorfields suggested the erection of a permanent centre of missionary effort. And so presently the Foundry was secured for the purpose. This was an old building which had once been the Royal Cannon Foundry; and it was in recasting the bronze guns that had been won in Marlborough's victories, that a terrible explosion occurred which wrecked the Foundry, and occasioned the loss of many lives. A well-known incident this, by the way, which led to a friendless German, Schalch, who had warned the authorities of what would happen from the dampness of the moulds to be employed, being at once put over the heads of the whole ordnance department, and made master founder.

Well, Wesley was now the master founder in the old building, described as a ruinous place full of holes and corners, with an old pantile roof, and a pulpit of rough timber. And presently the germs of existing institutions began to be developed, and Wesley had rooms fitted up there for himself, and for his mother also, who spent the last years of her life in the ruinous old building. To Susannah Wesley, her days at Epworth, and her married life with her strange, wayward husband, must have become dim and faded memories, while her early days among those very scenes came back, no doubt, with strong pathetic force. Then there was a school on the premises, with one Silas Told for a master, afterwards the zealous friend of the poor condemned felons in Newgate—a strange, visionary man, a wanderer over land and sea—something of a buccaneer about Campeachy Bay, and a slaver's hand on the Guinea coast; but who now was in his element as teacher and local preacher, with sixty boys and six girls under his charge to be educated, and afterwards put to good trades. There is no trace now left of the Foundry, which stood where is now the corner of Windmill Street, by Finsbury Square; but at that time, where the City Road Chapel now stands were open fields used as tenter-

grounds where weavers and calico-printers spread their cloths. And here presently Wesley built his chapel, all among the fields, to be reached only by a narrow, country-looking footpath.

Along this path on the dark wintry mornings would be seen flitting long lines of lanthorns and candles borne by zealous members who came from far and near to Wesley's early services. And among these friendly souls the rest of John Wesley's life was spent; with many journeyings to and fro, but with this chapel and house as the home and centre of the new church. And here he grew old, well tended and cared for by ministering women, but with no woman to occupy that inner place in his heart, which in reality never had been filled. Wesley had married, indeed, but in haste, and with a woman of incompatible temper; he was too susceptible, perhaps, to feminine influence to be a good judge of feminine character; and although he had had love-passages in his youth—he had loved the charming Mary Granville, afterwards Mrs. Delaney—yet here as elsewhere his love found no resting-place, and in heart he was celibate to the last.

And here everything stands much as Wesley left it; the chapel itself in all its important parts, the vestry where he lay in state after death in his gown and bands; his home, with the old clock still ticking on the staircase; his old Wedgwood teapot, his bureau, and armchair, all kept as nearly as possible in its original state, and probably to be so preserved for centuries to come. And close by John Wesley sleeps his last sleep in the midst of his faithful flock, a saintly venerable memory for all time.

We are told that Wesley was buried early in the morning, between two and three o'clock, to avoid the crowds that might be expected to flock in dangerous numbers to the ceremony. But long before the hour fixed a forest of glittering lights were seen crossing the fields in all directions, borne by a crowd of mourners all touched to the heart with a sense of loss and bereavement, and when the solemn words of the burial service were heard in the dim night, at the passage where ordinarily is read, "To take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here departed," the officiating minister paused for a moment and for "brother" substituted "father," whereupon a low, subdued wail of grief and lamentation rose from the very hearts of those present. A pathetic incident

surely, that is worth remembering in the crowds of the City Road, and among the noise and brightness of London's nightly carnival.

BEFORE SAILING.

LEAN closer, darling, let thy tender heart
Beat against mine that aches with heavy woe,
Drop thy quick woman's tears to soothe thy smart,
Ah me! that I could ease my sorrow so!
But men must work, sweetheart, and women weep,
So says the song, so runs the world's behest;
Yet time will pass, and tender comfort creep
With hope in company unto thy breast.
Now ere we part, while yet on lip and cheek
Close kisses linger, clinging, passionate,
There is a farewell word love fain would speak,
A tender thought love labours to translate
In earnest words, whose memory through the years
Shall calm thy soul, and dry thy dropping tears.
If in thy garden when the roses blow,
Or by the shelter of thine evening fire,
In any winter gloom, or summer glow,
Thy soul floats seaward with a fond desire
(Fonder and stronger than thy tender use),
Think thou, "One longs for me across the foam;"
And if, sweet-falling like the evening dews,
A special peace enfolds thine heart and home,
Then say thou, dear, with softly-bated breath,
"In some lone wilderness beyond the sea,
Whether in light of life, or gloom of death,
My lover's spirit speaks to God for me!"
Kiss me, beloved, without doubt or dread,
We are not sundered, though farewell be said.

EARTHQUAKES IN ENGLAND.

AN earthquake is looked upon as a startling item of domestic news, although there is no very good reason why it should be, seeing that our tight little island has experienced its fair proportion of such visitations since our ancestors were frightened out of their propriety in 1101, by what William of Malmesbury calls "a horrid spectacle," when buildings, high and low, were lifted up throughout the land, only, however, to "settle as before."

Twelve years afterwards, a shock was experienced at Shrewsbury and Nottingham, but it does not appear to have been felt elsewhere, excepting so far as the rivers were concerned. Men passed over the Trent dry-footed, the Thames was fordable at London Bridge, and most of the larger rivers sank very low; the chronicler recording that a hard winter, with pestilence, murrain, and famine, followed thereupon. In the succeeding year another earthquake interrupted building operations at Croyland, the new work at the church there giving way, and the old walls cracking and bulging so badly that they had to be shored up till the edifice was roofed in.

Just before Easter in 1185, Holinshed tells us that there chanced a sore earth-

quake through all parts of the land, the like of which had not been heard of in England since the beginning of the world, for stones that lay couched fast in the earth were removed out of their places, houses were overthrown, and the great church at Lincoln rent from the top downwards. Strangely enough, the last-mentioned calamity is unnoticed by the local historians, who speak of the earthquake as a blessing to the city, by its clearing away a multitude of ruinous old hovels, which were a disgrace and danger to the place.

St. Valentine's Day, 1247, was made memorable by an earthquake doing much damage in London. In September, 1275, the town of Glastonbury was shaken into ruins, and upon St. Mary's Day, 1361, an earthquake, extending through all England, "greatly 'gan the people all affraye, so dreadful was it then and perilous." Twenty-one years later came the earthquake of 1382, when Harding saw

Castles, walls, towers, and steeples fyll,
Houses, and trees, and crags from the hill.

It happened on the 21st of May, and was followed by a violent commotion of the waters on the coast, the ships in harbour being driven against each other with great violence. A song-writer of the time says :

When this earth quok,
Was none so proud he n'as aghast,
And all his jollity forsook,
And thought on God while that it last.
And as soon as it was overpast,
Men wox as evil as they dead ere ;
Each man in his heart may cast,
This was a warning to be ware.
Forsooth this was a Lord to dread,
So suddenly made men aghast ;
Of gold and silver they took no heed,
But out of their houses full soon they past.
Chambers, chimneys, all to-barst [burst],
Churches and castles foul 'gan fare ;
Pinnacles, steeples, to ground it cast,
And all was for warning to be ware.

So far, we have not met with a single instance of earth-opening, but in 1571, according to Burton : "The earth, near Kinaston, Herefordshire, began to open, and a hill called Marclay Hill, with a rock under it, made at first a mighty bellowing noise, which was heard afar off, and then lifted itself up a great height, and began to travel, carrying along with it the trees that grew upon it, the sheepfolds and sheep abiding thereon at the same time. In the place from whence it removed it left a gaping distance, forty feet wide and eighty ells long. The whole field was nearly twenty acres. Passing along, it overthrew a chapel standing in the way, removed a yew-tree growing in the churchyard. With

the like violence, it thrust before it highways, houses, and trees ; made tilled ground pastures, and again turned pasture into tillage." Three years later, the counties of Yorkshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and Gloucestershire experienced a shaking, but little harm was done.

Elizabeth's reign was as notable for its great earthquakes as its great men, great deeds, and great events. On the evening of the 6th of April, 1580, London was frightened by a severe shock. All the bells of Cockaigne, from the great bell of Westminster downwards, clanged loudly and discordantly as the amazed citizens rushed in terror from their abodes. The churches were emptied of their congregations in no time ; the audiences streamed out of the playhouses ; and the Templars, leaving their meal unfinished, ran out into the street, knives in hand. Part of the Temple Church was thrown down. Loosened by the vibration, scores of the stones of St. Paul's fell into the churchyard ; and stones falling from Christ Church killed an apprentice and a servant-maid. So great was the consternation created that the Queen ordered the issuing of a form of prayer for the occasion, which everybody was enjoined to use before retiring for the night. No second shock, however, was felt in the capital ; but the towns on the Kentish coast experienced four in the space of ten hours. At Sandwich, four of the arches of St. Mary's Church were rent asunder. At Dover, part of the castle-wall was cast down, and portions of the cliff tumbled into the sea. Matters were as bad the other side of the Channel, the town of Montpellier suffering such damage that Queen Bess urged "the principal gentlemen of certain counties" to contribute liberally to the relief of those "of the religion" dwelling there — "God's merciful warning by the late earthquake being an extraordinary admonition to Englishmen to act with true Christian sympathy towards the calamity of the afflicted."

Shakespeare probably had this earthquake in his mind when making Juliet's nurse fix the date of the weaning of her charge by remembering, "'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years."

For more than a century England remained undisturbed by any internal convulsion worth noticing, but on the 8th of September, 1692, a shock was felt in the home counties, especially

at Sheerness, Sandwich, Dover, and Deal, the thick walls of the castle at the last-mentioned town being so shaken that the whole building was expected to come down. Evelyn, who was dining at Wotton, in Surrey, at the time, says: "None of us at the table were sensible of any motion, but the maid, who was then making the beds, and another servant in a garret above her, felt it plainly; and so did my wife's laundry-maid here at Deptford; and generally, wherever they were above in the upper floors, they felt the trembling more sensibly. In London, and particularly in Dover Street, they were greatly affrighted." The shock came during the hour of "high change," and the merchants rushed incontinently from their congregating places; the people left their houses to seek safety in the open streets, which were crowded with a terror-stricken throng, some of whom fainted from sheer apprehension. No serious damage resulted either in town or in country, but the authorities improved the occasion by enforcing the laws against drunkenness, debauchery, and using of profane oaths with greater strictness than they had done before the earthquake frightened the population into believing that the world was coming to an end.

In the opening months of 1750, the weather-mongers were puzzled by having to undergo tropical heat, and Londoners were alarmed by evening skies of fiery red, betokening, they thought, some impending calamity. Their fears were justified by a smart earthquake shock about noon on the 8th of February, making Westminster Hall tremble to its foundations, shaking houses in Holborn and Chancery Lane, and causing dwellers near the Tower to think an explosion had occurred there. Exactly a month afterwards, between one and two in the morning, the earth had another shivering fit. "I had been awake," wrote Horace Walpole, "and had scarce dozed again, on a sudden I felt my bolster lift my head. I thought somebody was getting from under my bed, but soon found it was a strong earthquake, that lasted nearly half a minute, with a violent vibration and great roaring. I rang my bell; my servant came in frightened out of his senses; in an instant we heard all the windows in the neighbourhood flung up. I got up and found people running into the streets, but saw no mischief done. There has been some; two old houses flung down, several chimneys, and much earthenware. It has

nowhere reached above ten miles from London."

The alarm in town was intense; nothing else was talked of or written about. Dr. Sherlock made it the theme for a pastoral letter, of which ten thousand copies were sold in two days. Pastors told their flocks the earthquake was a judgment on the city for its manifold sins, and the women at least believed them. Shrewd traders turned it to profitable account by selling earthquake gowns, for the women to wear while sitting out of doors at night; a quack got rid of his earthquake pills; and Turner, the china-dealer, having had a vase cracked by the shock, doubled the price of the set.

While the excitement was at its height, a soldier of Lord Delawarr's troop, turning prophet, announced a third and more destructive shock for the 5th of April. The "upper ten" were seized with an uncontrollable desire to visit their country houses, seven hundred and thirty outward-bound coaches passing Hyde Park Corner in three days, while all the roads out of London were crowded with vehicles of all sorts on the fourth day. Ladies of quality went beyond the ten mile circuit for the night, to play cards, intending, Walpole suggested, to return next day to look for the bones of their husbands and families in the rubbish. One heroic lady came up from the country that she might die with her friends. Those who stayed at home and went bravely to bed, were disturbed by reckless revellers shouting, "Past four o'clock, and a dreadful earthquake!" Nothing came of the prediction, and the unlucky seer was sent to Bedlam, although his wife assured Lord Delawarr that if he would have him examined by a sensible man, the trooper would be found to be perfectly sane. Before the country folk had done laughing at the cockneys, they had reason for becoming serious on their own account. Portsmouth, Southampton, and the Isle of Wight experienced a shock on the 18th of March; Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Flintshire coming in for one in April; in May Dorsetshire was similarly disturbed; Somersetshire's turn came in July; that of Lincolnshire in August; the series being completed on the last day of September by a violent shock felt through Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and Suffolk.

Earthquake shocks were experienced in one part or another of England in 1852, 1859, 1860, 1863, 1868, and 1871, with no worse effects than the oscillation of a

few buildings, the rattling of window-frames, and shaking of tables and chairs. Even less alarming was the slight trembling of the earth felt at the little East Anglian village of Plendon, towards the end of February of the present year; the precursor of the most destructive earthquake yet known in English annals, if older chroniclers told all there was to tell. The ten seconds disturbance of the morning of the 22nd of April, 1884, was felt from London in the south, to Leicester in the north, extending so far west as the town of Northampton. In London nothing more serious than the stoppage of a clock, and the shaking of a building here and there, came of it, but the people of Colchester and the villages about it will long remember how their houses were unroofed, their chimneys overthrown, and their streets encumbered with the débris of dwellings suddenly rendered uninhabitable. Such destruction of property, from such a cause, is something new in England, and calculated to shake one's faith in future immunity from even worse visitations of the same nature.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A COURT M.C.

SIR LEWIS LEWKNER, master of the ceremonies at the Court of King James the First, may, for aught we know, have had a pleasant time of it, seeing that the burden of the office fell upon the shoulders of his deputy or assistant, who has left us a record of his trials and troubles in a little book entitled *Finetti and Philoxenis*; some choice observations of Sir John Finett, Knight, touching the reception and precedence, the treatment and audience, the punctillos and contests of foreign ambassadors in England. Whatever the knight's emoluments may have been, they were hardly earned, for his life was well-nigh worried out of him with settling questions of precedence and etiquette, allaying petty jealousies, and keeping the representatives of foreign princes on something like peaceable terms with one another.

The Court festivities consequent upon the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to the Count Palatine, in 1613, extended over several days. Sir John Finett invited M. de Boisot, the archduke's ambassador, to honour the second or third day's merry-makings with his presence; an invitation he received with a troubled countenance, and the complaint that the Venetian

ambassador had been asked to the nuptials, and other ambassadors had been invited to attend at masques alone, an honour never paid to him. Not that he would demur, on his own account, even if called upon to wait at the royal table, but as the representative of so great a Prince, one who could not allow a thought of any competition between a monarchical sovereign and a small republic governed by a sort of burghers, he must decline attending the solemnities. After letting him sulk a while, King James wrote to M. de Boisot with his own hand, explaining that the Venetian envoy owed his wedding invitation to the fact that he was the first to congratulate his majesty on the happy event, and had put his men in new liveries in honour thereof, a compliment no Prince had paid him. Furthermore, James pointed out that one day was equal to another in dignity, and that it had always been customary to couple together the representatives of France and Venice, and those of Austria and Spain.

Sir Noel Caron, the ambassador from the United Provinces, wisely scorned troubling himself about such trifles, and his wisdom was rewarded by his being asked to attend the festivities from beginning to end. On the other hand, the French ambassador was so arrogant in his pretensions as actually to demand precedence of the heir to the crown; while the Venetian ambassador protested against sitting on a stool at the banqueting-table, although no persons were accommodated with chairs save the bride and bridegroom. Neither Frenchman or Venetian, however, prevailed in their reasonless pretences.

Upon the king determining that the ambassadors of Spain and Austria should figure among the guests at the Earl of Somerset's wedding, Finett had to invite the others too, with the understanding that they excused themselves. The Venetian readily agreed, and the Frenchman prayed to be excused on the plea of a diffusion of rheum into his teeth and the expected return of a fit of the ague. But Sir John had no sooner taken leave of the latter than he of Venice insisted upon seeing him, to complain that the Frenchman had been vouchsafed a solemn invitation; his anger only being appeased by Finett inviting him over again in exactly the same words as he had used to his rival. Then he wanted to know if the Austrian had been invited. Sir John affected ignorance, whereupon the Italian said he was dissembling, and he doubted not he

was going straightway to the Austrian's lodging. Finett left him to think so, "holding it ill manners to mar a belief of an ambassador's making."

By-and-by there was another marriage at Court, and then came the turn of the two ambassadors previously left out in the cold; but the French envoy must needs ride the high horse again. He would make one at the supper and after-entertainment, but he could not come to dinner, he had already entered into his Lent, and two meals of flesh together would be too great a sin. He was assured there would be plenty of fish on the table. Then the reason of his surliness came out. The king, he declared, had shown his preference for the Spanish ambassador by inviting him to Somerset's wedding, and it would be wronging his master for him to march in the second place, as he would seem to do, if he appeared at dinner; nay, he would not attend the supper unless he had a chair, like the bride. However, he thought better of it, and afterwards bragged he had got the best of the Spaniard by dining in the company of the King, Queen, and Princess, which the Don had not done at the Earl's marriage-feast.

Troublesome they all were, but the Frenchman was the most unmanageable of the diplomatic crew. The Twelfth-tide masque of 1617 was to see Prince Charles make his first appearance on the stage; and as negotiations for his marriage with the Infanta had then commenced, the Spanish ambassador, naturally, was desired to assist at the performance. As soon as this came to the ears of the French ambassador, that touchy gentleman hurried to Whitehall, and demanding and obtaining audience, proceeded to declare he could show by precedents without number that the Spanish ambassador had never been present at any such entertainment without the permission of the King of France's representative being first obtained, winding up with a threat of making formal complaint to his sovereign of the wrong done to him in his ambassador's person. His vapourings were unheeded, and the irate envoy kept his word, sending his secretary post-haste to Paris, receiving letters of recall in due time, and thereupon departing the land, much to its ruler's relief. When Twelfth-tide came round again, neither France or Spain were represented at the English court, and taking advantage of the quiet time, King James determined no longer to admit ambassadors to sit

"under the State" with him, and ordered a seat to be made apart, "furnished with stools, cushions, and leaning-carpetts," in the right of his own place, "but somewhat obliquely forward," and therein sat the newly-arrived Venetian envoy and the commissioners from the United Provinces.

Gondemar's coming to England in 1619 was followed by a revival of the old jealousies. To avoid any appearance of favouritism, the king invited all the ambassadors, great and small, to the tilting in honour of his birthday, providing separate seats for the representatives of France and Spain at the same distance from the royal one. The Count de Tilleurs discovered that his rival's seat was more in the public eye than his own, and nothing would content him but being allowed his choice, as his master could make no question of priority, which he would challenge and take as his due wheresoever. His pretences being scouted, the Count and his wife stayed away, and left the Spaniard master of the field. The lesser diplomatic lights acquiesced in being placed together at the other end of the tilt-yard, but unfortunately the Bohemian envoy was called away to Gravesend, whereupon the Venetian ambassador discovered that if he were placed with the Savoyard and Dutchman at one end of the yard, while Gondemar was alone in his glory at the other, it would be derogatory to his quality; the first place of an inferior degree being worse than the last of a superior one. Finett got the Bohemian to promise to be back in time to attend the tilting, and thought he made things comfortable, when Caron, usually so easy to manage, announced that he was specially instructed not to allow precedence to any non-regal ambassador save to him of Venice, and if the Duke of Savoy's representative intended to be present, he should absent himself, which he did, although the Savoyard was unable to attend, much to the Venetian's discomposure, he suspecting the missing gentleman had insinuated himself somewhere near the King, and so taken precedence of him, which would necessitate his immediate departure from the country.

Of such bickerings about nothing, Finett has much more to say; but the crowning "clash," as he calls it, was between Sir Robert Shirley, the Anglo-Persian, and a real Persian, who disputed his credentials. Shirley had been duly received at Court as ambassador from Persia, the genuineness of the letters he presented being taken for

granted, as they were "un-understood for want of an interpreter—nowhere to be found in England." One day, Sir John Finett was notified by the merchants of the East India Company that another envoy had arrived from Persia, and taken up his lodging at the house of Alderman Holliday.

Shirley, Finett, the Earl of Cleaveland, and eight other gentlemen, went there to welcome the new comer. They found him sitting on a chair with his legs doubled under him, but he took no notice of their entrance. Sir Robert saluted him, and Lord Cleaveland, through the interpreter (from whence he came Sir John does not tell us), explained the object of the visit, getting no answer for his pains. Then Shirley produced his credentials, first touching his eyes with them, next holding them over his head, and then, kissing them, proffered them to the stranger, that he might do the same. But, rising suddenly from his seat, the Persian approached Sir Robert, snatched the papers from his hand, and tore them to pieces, and then struck the Englishman in the face with his fist.

Before anyone could interfere, the Persian's son followed his sire's example, flew at Shirley, and with two or three blows overthrew him. Master Maxwell, of the Bedchamber, and Lord Cleaveland pulled back their friend's new assailant, while Sir John Finett and the rest laid their hands on their swords, not drawing them because not any one sword or dagger had been drawn by the Persians. Upon Lord Cleaveland expostulating with the chief offender, the latter apologised, pleading that he could not control his rage against one who had dared to counterfeit his master's signature—which was always affixed to the top of his letters—and boasted he had married his master's niece. Shirley denied the last accusation, declaring he had only professed to have married a kinswoman of the King of Persia; and for the rest, it was that monarch's custom to affix his signature on the back of his letters when a foreigner was the recipient. The Englishmen took their leave of the Persian with little or no respects to him, but not at all satisfied with Shirley for taking his beating so meekly. Upon the affair being reported to his majesty, he ordered both the supposed envoys from Persia to return there with all speed, accompanied by Sir Dormer Colton, charged to ascertain the rights of the matter. When beginning

their voyage, the different ambassadors in different ships, they all three died on the way, and with them their quarrel and the enquiry after it.

Debarred from resenting ambassadorial impertinences, our M.C. rejoiced when freer men paid his tormentors in their own coin. Upon the arrival of the Marquis de Cadente at Gravesend, the Earl of Arundel went there to greet him in the King's name. Much to that nobleman's surprise, the French envoy awaited his coming at the stairhead of his chamber-door, and accompanied him no farther at leave-taking. Not brooking such discourtesy, next day he sent word that, as the ambassador was so great, and his lodging so little, he would not again be troublesome to him there, but meet him in the street to accompany him on his embarkation. He kept his word, the Frenchman never proffering his hand. When Denmark Street was reached, the Earl left his uncivil charge at the foot of the stairs, telling him the gentlemen above would show him to his lodgings. King James stormed upon hearing of the matter, not at Arundel, but at the Count, and he was fain to excuse his conduct on the plea of indisposition. The Duke of Buckingham took another way of becoming even with the Spanish ambassador for declining to appear at a supper given by the Duke, because his grace had also invited another ambassador with whom he was on bad terms. Buckingham sent Endymion Porter to the Spaniard's lodging with three "flaskets" of the choicest of three courses of cates to be served at the feast—one full of cold meats for the ante-pasto; another with fat fowls ready for the spit, of all sorts; and a third of the best and rarest sweetmeats—with the message that the duke would have held it "an honour and an happiness" to have had his company, but since he could not have it, he desired him to taste of what had been provided for him, and that at the tasting of it at his supper he would be pleased to drink the health of the King of England, as he, the Duke, would at the same time drink to the health of the King of Spain.

Now and again, the ladies gave Sir John Finett an infinite deal of trouble. The States ambassadress took umbrage at herself and her daughters being thrust into a corner at a masque, her wrath being noways allayed by the reminder that she had chosen to sit apart from the great ladies because she "wanted language," and, therefore, if she were unsatisfied, had only

herself to blame for it. At the Palatine marriage, the Lord Chamberlain directed Sir John to place the wife of the French ambassador beneath the Countesses and above the Baronesses. Standing to her woman's right, and possessed already of her proper place, as she called it, the Viscountess of Effingham would not budge an inch to allow the ambassadress to go above her; so, dinner over, the Frenchman called his lady's coach, but, after much persuasion, consented to stay, upon his wife being seated between the Countess of Kildare and the Viscountess of Haddington; my lady of Effingham "forbearing with rather too much than too little stomach, both the supper and the company." At another time, my Lady Dorset and other Countesses made a mighty to-do at the Countess of Buckingham setting her niece above them, by placing her "above herself and beneath her daughter the Marquess"—a proof, by the way, of the absurdity of the mode of spelling "marquis" in vogue in some quarters. Altogether, the post of Master of the Ceremonies at the Court of St. James was one to be eschewed rather than coveted.

CURIOSITIES OF TRADE.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

THUS far into the bowels of the Bills of Entry have we marched on without impediment. The process has been prosaic enough; thoroughly commonplace have been the incidents on the way. But now the time is come when I must leave all these meaner things, and rise superior to that which ministers solely to our conveniences. Oh, that I had the genius of Pindar, to soar on eagle-wing far beyond the ken of the ordinary mortal! Only he could do justice to the theme which I am now approaching. Would that I had the soul of the poet! I would describe in glowing strains the ecstatic thoughts which chase each other through my entranced brain. But I have not the pen of the poet; the gewgaw fetters of rhyme, as the Hampshire farmer called them, are to me real clogs to progress. To be sure, an Englishman has the resource of blank verse, but I am afraid my blank verse would be only prose cut into lengths, like the staves about which I have already discoursed.

But what has all this rigmarole to do with our daily imports? Why, to serve as an introduction, to awaken a lively

curiosity as to what is coming next, to prepare the mind for something rather out of the way, which when it makes its appearance will create the interest which always attaches itself to undoubted worth. But I mentally hear, "Cut it short;" "Come to the point;" and, therefore, without further preamble, I find on board a West India steamer forty-nine turtle.

Does not everyone feel that we have now got on to an interesting topic? We all know that turtle are not found about our shores, we know perfectly well, therefore, that they must be brought here from somewhere else, and yet it certainly did look odd to see them down in the bill in black and white. I wonder how they are brought, whether sprawling about the deck, or how? An early recollection of mine is seeing them in an hotel-yard near Birkenhead in large tubs of salt water; perhaps that is the way they are brought over. But, however they make the passage, it cannot be doubted that they must be in poor condition before they get converted into the soup so dear to the alderman. Even if they are fed, which I doubt, they cannot get their natural food, and must feel keenly the change from tropical to temperate regions. The fact is, that good as the turtle-soup is, the name is a misnomer. Call it what you like, it is really very strong soup with some turtle flesh and fat in it. Conger-eel is said to form the basis, but, in addition, there is I know not how much stock, produced by stewing down veal, fowls, and ham. When this strong extract is prepared it is only necessary to add the turtle, and there you are. Real turtle-soup is only to be got where the animal abounds, and is of necessity a totally different thing from what we are accustomed to here. I know several people who have often feasted on the creature when fresh caught, and not one of them has gone into the ecstasies one would expect. But perhaps this is a matter of opinion. Mrs. Gill, who spent six months on the Island of Ascension, where the creatures swarmed, assures us that "the first spoonful of that clear, creamy nectar called turtle-soup is enough to reconcile any gourmet to banishment here for life." To understand what this means we may mention that nothing grows on the island. Everything has to be brought from the mainland, including even water, of which a gallon a day is the household allowance for all purposes. Mrs. Gill sent some clothes to the wash, and her servant

came back to say that she hadn't sent the water. Everything, in fact, there is upside down. Water is carefully measured; potatoes are fourpence per pound; occasional cabbages from St. Helena are knocked down by auction at one shilling and sixpence a piece; milk is priceless; but you can have turtle-soup for nothing. For the benefit of persons about to travel, we may as well give the same lady's opinion on the meat of the turtle. The steaks are excellent stewed or baked, but will not stand the gridiron. Cooked over the fire the meat becomes as hard and juiceless as an Ascension beef-steak. With the fins, calipash, and calipee, excellent soup was made when water could be spared. Our readers will remember, therefore, whenever anyone catches a turtle he must not try to grill it.

Needless to say that we receive large quantities of oysters from the States, thousands upon thousands of barrels yearly. It is surprising, however, to find four hundred and seventy-eight barrels in one lot from Brazil, of all places in the world, when we remember that the nearest part of the country is a fortnight's steam, and is right on the equator. I should not be astonished to find that they arrived here in the condition in which our George the Second preferred them—rather stale, as the anecdote euphemistically puts it. This certainly is the only shipment from that source which has caught my eye; more than that I cannot assert. While on the subject of the West Indies, I must notice one shipment which, from its very magnitude, looks strange. One vessel arrives from Trinidad laden entirely with coconuts—no fewer than two hundred and sixty-five thousand of them. Here is indigestion for the whole British population, surely! And this is only one shipment out of many, though it is the largest I have met with. For this is an article we receive almost every day in certain seasons from both West and East Indies, though the former are by far the larger producers. Next door, so to speak, to the West India Islands, are the Bahamas, now little heard of, but well-known during the American War as the starting-point for the final run of the blockade-runner. The chief productions of these islands appear to be shells and sponge. I find one steamer from Nassau bringing seven thousand three hundred and forty-four conch-shells, which go chiefly to Italy, to be cut into the well-known shell cameos, and two hundred and fifty-eight barrels of sponge.

This last is found there abundantly, and is well known to us all in the shape of those enormous coarse conveniences for the morning tub, and for washing carriages. This is a totally different thing from the fine small sponges with which we are all familiar, and which come to us from the Mediterranean.

As a specimen of West India produce, it will be sufficient to mention that one vessel of fourteen hundred and sixty-five tons came into London loaded with nothing else but rum and sugar.

From Tampico a steamer brought three hundred and fifty-four bales of istle, a name which must be strange to nearly everybody. It is, perhaps, better known as Mexican fibre, and is largely imported into this country for making small brushes. Talking of these, of course, leads me to piassava, of which one shipment from Bahia consisted of five thousand three hundred and seventy-eight bales. It may not be generally known that this is the fibre of the leaf-stalk of a tree which is found plentifully in Brazil, and whose fruit is the coquilla-nut, well known to turners, and converted by them into the rich brown umbrella-handles which everybody has seen. The fibre is the material which is used here for making into the strong sweeping-brushes one sees used in the streets, and everywhere, in fact. Its introduction must have been an incalculable benefit. Before that date, broom-bristles or whalebone were the only materials that could be used, and of the latter and better article the supply is practically limited, and consequently high in price. Amongst the great number of our imports from Jamaica, all may be said to be well known except one. This is pimento, which is almost peculiar to that island. It is the dried unripe berry of the *Eugenia pimento*, and though little known outside the trade by this name, it is very well known to us by its household name of allspice.

Everybody—that is to say, every male—is or has been a boy, and the next entry will therefore be of interest. It is no other than ten cases of slate-pencils. I am unable to say whether this useful article is produced in England, but it certainly does look odd that a country which exports enormous quantities of slate should at the same time receive slate-pencils from abroad. Another entry will be still more interesting to ingenuous youth, and that is nineteen cases of marbles from Rotterdam. No doubt these will be what in my boyish

days were called stoneys. Very likely that is their name yet. Possibly, however, they may be alleys. These were highly thought of in my time, but I dare say they are not so much esteemed now.

Now comes another article also highly esteemed by the British schoolboy, but for a different reason. This is three hundred and sixty-three bags of hazel-nuts from Constantinople. It may not be generally known that we receive enormous quantities of these from several parts of the Turkish Empire. They constitute, in fact, the staple produce of some districts around Trebizond, and one may form an idea of their importance when we find, according to the consular report, that the value of the export to Great Britain amounted to twenty thousand pounds in 1877. Although we produce considerable quantities at home, it is evident that we cannot supply ourselves with all that we can consume.

Perhaps the best known of the foreign nuts is the Brazil nut. The word is not a misnomer, for we do actually get them from Brazil. There are many varieties, whose points of difference are only to be noticed by careful inspection, but they are all the seeds of certain forest-trees, and are largely shipped at Para at the mouth of the Amazon. I find one vessel bringing two hundred and seventy-eight barrels. They are usually entered as Sapucaia nuts, a name which will no doubt be unknown to most people. The real Sapucaia is the seed of the *Lecythis ollaria*, the largest known tree in the Brazilian forests. Its flavour is said to be superior to that of the ordinary Brazil nut, but its peculiarity consists in the way it is produced. Like all the rest of its tribe, the seeds are contained, a dozen or more, in a hard covering, which, when ripe, falls to the ground, is thus burst open, and the seeds scattered to take their chance. The covering of the Sapucaia closely resembles an iron pot with a lid on; the monkeys, who are very fond of the seeds, often manage to insert their paws in the pot by lifting up the lid, and not unfrequently find themselves unable to get away on account of the lid closing tightly on the paw. The tree thus gets the name of the monkey-pot, by which it is well-known in Brazil. Another Brazilian fruit, which for some years has been coming in in increasing quantity, is the orange. Most people must have noticed the very large, somewhat oval yellow fruit. These appear in October, before the Spanish are ripe enough for

market, and thus help us to a supply of oranges all the year round. Oranges are, in themselves, sufficient to furnish material for a separate paper, and, as there is nothing strange about them, they claim only a passing notice here. Grapes, however, deserve a few remarks. It will be remembered that the enormous supply which weekly arrives in England is of comparatively recent introduction. In the absence of statistics, I can only put down my own impression, which would date it perhaps fifteen years ago. Every one knows them as Almeria grapes, and that is the great port of shipment. I find one steamer bringing six thousand seven hundred barrels, and that is only one entry out of many. It is very possible that the position of this port may be unknown; I shall therefore feel that I am giving some geographical information when I tell my readers they will find it on the coast of Andalusia, in the south of Spain.

It is impossible to estimate too highly the importance of this large supply of the most famous of all fruits. Every physician will insist on the dietetic value of the fruit of the vine; most of us, I fancy, have heard of the grape-cure as practised in the north of Italy, whose peculiarity lies in the patient living solely on bread and grapes. Henceforward the Englishman who is so disposed can treat himself at home, the material is at his own door, and cheap enough.

Perhaps of even later introduction than grapes are pineapples. These come largely from the West Indies, and are sold here very cheaply. A larger and finer kind, however, comes to us from the Cape Verde and the Azores Islands. It is also from the former that we receive the chief portion of the bananas, which are now not uncommon in the fruiterers' shops. Personally, I must say that I am quite willing to do without these; to me, their sweetness is much too cloying. Like most tropical fruits, they are wanting in that slight acidity which is so grateful and refreshing to the palate.

But I am forgetting the title of my paper. Grapes and pineapples can hardly be called curiosities. Their importance as agreeable articles of food must be my excuse.

What in the world can we want with two hundred and twenty-two tons of white sand from Antwerp? Now this really does want explanation. Isn't there sand enough in England? There is plenty, to be sure, but not of this sort. We get

large quantities from abroad of a certain kind of sand which comes in solely to be converted into glass, by the well-known process. It is well-known that we do not produce ice enough for our own consumption; still, it looks odd to find a vessel coming into London from Christiania with three hundred and forty-three tons on board.

I have already expressed an opinion that nothing could be brought into the country more insignificant than wooden skewers. I find, however, that I was wrong. There is something still less valuable of the same material, and from the same source. It would be impossible to guess what this is, and, therefore, please note that I find on one steamer from New York seventy-six barrels of shoe-pegs. Skewers I thought were the climax; this, however, caps the climax.

A writer for the public possesses, in a high degree, the quality of omniscience, yet I must confess that I was staggered at finding in a steamer from Brazil seventy-five packages of Jaborandy. So complete was my ignorance, that I had to write to the importers to ask for information. All the information, however, that they could give me was that it was medicinal leaves. Let me observe also that before I had their reply, I had found out for myself. Jaborandi, it appears, is a comprehensive name in South America, applied to various plants of very different affinities. The leaves of the particular one in question have been long used by the natives as a means of producing perspiration. They were first sent over to Europe from Pernambuco in 1874, and have been experimented upon by various physicians, who all agree that they are a powerful diaphoretic. Its practical value as a remedial agent is, therefore, now undergoing examination. The plant is figured in Bentley and Trimen's Medical Plants, number forty-eight, as *Pilocarpus pennatifolius*, and appears to be a shrub four or five feet high.

Another curious entry is one hundred and eighty-five bales of *Adansonia* fibre from the West Coast of Africa. This is the fibrous part of the baobab or calabash-tree, known to botanists as perhaps the largest tree in the world, not indeed from its height, but from its breadth. It has been known to be sixty to seventy feet in circumference, with branches, each as large as an ordinary tree, spreading around for sixty feet. The fibre finds a market here for paper-making. The tree was so named by Linnæus, after the famous French

botanist, Adanson. When one has had some experience of Bills of Entry, one gives up being surprised at any import. Yet I must acknowledge wondering why America should send us ten cases of salad dressing, which I find on one of the New York steamers. It is the only entry of the kind I have met with, and I am inclined to think Brother Jonathan's shipment would not turn out very remunerative.

Here is a steamer laden solely with one thousand two hundred and thirty-six tons of pyrites from Huelva. Most people will ask what is pyrites, and where is Huelva? Pyrites, then, is a rock, or stone, or mineral—call it which you like—which is found in enormous deposits in the south of Spain. It is a compound of sulphur and iron, with a small percentage of copper, and traces of silver and gold. These mines are now worked by two well-known companies, the Tharsis and the Rio Tinto, whose names are usually to be seen in the money articles of all the papers. This article supplies an instance of the admirable manner in which science works so as to utilise everything. The raw ore, if we may so call it, is brought here and sold to the maker of sulphuric acid, who burns out the sulphur. The cinders, as they are then called, are sent to works in different parts of the country, where they undergo various processes which result in the separation of the iron, the copper, and the precious metals, all of which are thus rendered available for their several ends.

England is well known to produce large quantities of glass, and in the highest qualities we are unrivalled. In the common descriptions, however, we are in a great measure beaten by the foreigner. How else can we explain two vessels from Bremen arriving in London the same day, one with one hundred and twenty-seven thousand six hundred and fifty, and the other with one hundred and seventy-three thousand three hundred and thirty glass bottles, and such entries as these are very common.

I find on a New York steamer one hundred cases stove-polish. I wonder if this is a superior article to our well-known black lead. One would think we need not go to the States for that.

There still remains one entry, with which I may finish in a very satisfactory manner. Did anyone ever think of seeing such an entry as this: One hundred and forty-three barrels of tortoisés? I know when I saw it I rubbed my eyes, but there it

was plain enough, and others like it are regularly to be met with. And now to give some information about them.

Anybody who lives in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, or, I should imagine, any of our chief cities, must often have seen large baskets full of tortoises exposed for sale in the streets. Those readers who have not had the opportunity of seeing them will please accept this as the statement of a well-known fact. We know perfectly well that these creatures are not natives of England, and they must, therefore, have come from abroad. That they do come, and in good quantities, is evident from the above entry. If I had been asked where they came from I should have said vaguely, "Oh, the South of Europe, I suppose," for I know they are common enough in the south of Spain. But it is not from Spain that we are supplied. If you will look at a map of Africa, you will find on the north-west a large portion of the empire of Morocco, of which the best-known ports are Mogador and Tangiers. Between these two are a few small ports, or rather places of call, which are served by a regular line of British steamers. From one of these small places—Casa Blanca, this large consignment was shipped. When we come to think of it we see at once that this style of package is at the same time the best and the only one available. No tortoise is afraid of being crushed; an extra hundred-weight or two on his back is of no consequence; he is prevented walking over the ship's side, and if being closely packed tends to keep him warm, well, so much the better for him as he gets into colder regions.

GERALD.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE.

CHAPTER XII. MR. GOODALL HAS HIS WAY.

"YOU won't mind my saying so, Theo dear, but it really does not do to be quite so odd," said Helen, with the superiority of a married woman.

They were in the drawing-room after dinner, and Mr. Goodall had not yet come in. Helen was looking down as she spoke, her long eyelashes were drooping, her fair head shone in the lamplight; her mouth was smiling, for she was very much amused at what her cousin had been saying. She was not vexed, for she thought Theo was a little ashamed of her prank that afternoon. Theo had explained how it all

happened, and had told her what she and Mr. Fane had talked about on the way home; this seemed quite a strange piece of condescension, and very satisfactory.

Theo's meekness encouraged Helen to moralise a little, in hopes of checking these adventures for the future.

"Am I odd? How do you mean?" said Theo.

"Well, my dear, talking over a man's family affairs with him, the second time you have seen him. I dare say he took it very nicely, but don't you think he must have been rather surprised?"

"I was afraid he would be. I begged his pardon," said Theo. "Yes, I am sorry for some reasons. It seemed to remind him of so many tiresome things, poor boy! I don't think he really minded, though."

"Perhaps he felt that your interest was a compliment," said Helen, smiling still. "Some people like being pitied and fussed over; but I think," she added with sudden seriousness, "it is a dangerous game, Theo, for a girl like you."

She stopped and looked up at her cousin, but Theo hardly seemed to have heard her; she was leaning forward on a table, with Caldecott's last picture-book before her, her hand shading her eyes. Helen thought she might as well go on a little farther; her husband's influence had made her anxious, by some means or other, to throw cold water on Theo's acquaintance with the Fanes.

"You amuse me," she said, "when you talk of Mr. Fane as 'poor boy.' When I saw him at the wedding he looked like anything but that. I am pretty sure he is older than you think, and very much less simple and soft-hearted than you think. He has gone through a good deal before he came into these parts. But perhaps the next time you see him he will confide the story of his life. When do you expect to meet him again, Theo?"

Theo did not answer for a moment, and Helen was almost afraid that she had gone too far; she was venturing on the verge of those jokes which experience had taught her that Theo would not bear, even from her.

But Theo was not thinking at all of herself that evening, and it did not occur to her to be angry.

"He looked younger to-day than at the wedding," she said quietly. "I dare say you are right, though; he may have gone through a good deal, but of course that does not matter to us. What does matter is his sister, obliged to be in the house with those men. I don't like his brother at all—still, he is the brother, and he is

not unkind to her—but that other man is quite out of the question.”

“My child,” said Helen sorrowfully, “are you going to make it your mission to rescue all the girls who have horrid men in the house with them? You had better build a sort of orphanage, and set up an order of women to look after them, and be yourself the first lady-abbess.”

“There might be many worse ways of spending one’s life,” said Theo.

Helen laughed a little.

“No doubt,” she said. “But I think you might find a worse case than Miss Fane’s to begin with. She has two brothers to take care of her; both of them are supposed to be kind to her, one perfectly devoted. I’m sorry, but I can’t screw out much sympathy for her. If I could, I should be more sorry that both you and I will have to let her alone.”

“Why?” said Theo, taking her hand away from her eyes, and looking at Helen with an earnestness which was a little difficult to meet.

“Why, my dear,” said Helen, and coming quickly across to the sofa where her cousin was sitting, she put her arm round her and kissed her in her old, soft, coaxing way; “why,” she said, “I know John better than you do, Theo, and when he wishes a thing seriously, I know he has some good reason for it. He is not hard or unkind, but he is very sensible. He does not wish me to know these people, and so, Theo, don’t you understand, you can hardly see much of them while you are staying with me. Of course he knows that to-day was an accident, and, anyhow, you perhaps didn’t clearly see how decided he is about it. I really am very sorry, if you have taken a fancy to them,” she said affectionately, looking up into her friend’s face.

Theo had coloured a little, and there was a line in her forehead, but she could not be really angry with Helen, however stupid and unreasonable she might think Mr. Goodall. Helen had found the right means of getting her own way. Theo bent and kissed her soft cheek.

“All right, Nell. I won’t walk that way again,” she said. “And now let us drop the subject, please.”

It seemed like an easy victory, and Helen was satisfied. She wished for nothing better than to drop the subject. Theo might go on thinking about these people; most likely she would, in her own foolish, romantic way; but as long as she did not talk about them, and did not attempt to

carry her Quixotic fancies into action, her thoughts did not matter much. Helen had every reason to be satisfied.

For a few days after this adventure, Theo was, perhaps, a little more dreamy than usual, a little indifferent about going out, and seeing more of the neighbourhood, but one day she seemed to wake to a consciousness of her shortcomings, and a change came over her which gratified Mr. Goodall. She asked him to take her over his works, and spent a whole afternoon there with him in the hot sheds and workrooms, among the wheels, and the clay-heaps, and the smoking furnaces. She talked to the potters at their work, to the red-grimed boys who were fetching and carrying, to the rough girls who sat painting. The work was all rather rough, for Mr. Goodall’s clay was not of a sort to make china, and the people naturally were rough too. Those girls stared at Theo, and looked at each other, and glanced aside at the master, whose few words to them had always been entirely businesslike. Some of them were inclined to laugh at the strange experience, but they looked at Theo again, and softened and grew grave in spite of themselves. Mrs. Goodall had walked through the rooms once since she came, but without much interest, and with very great dislike of the dirt, the noise, the heat, and the staring of the workpeople. Her light dress was more suited for a tennis-party; her lip curled with disgust at the whole thing, and she spoke to nobody but her husband.

Yet they liked seeing her; she was a pretty thing to look at, and their staring was all admiration. One or two pretty girls tried their best, on following Sundays and holidays, to copy her dress and air. She was quite their idea of what a lady ought to be; far more within their comprehension than this friend of hers, whose beauty was of a kind they did not understand, and who stopped and looked them in the face with rather sad eyes, and asked questions which confused them, and took their work in her slight hands, asking how it was done. When she and Mr. Goodall had passed on, there were great arguments in the workshops.

“But she don’t look like t’other one, and my word, if I was a lady, wouldn’t I wear a smarter frock nor that!” was the opinion of the prettiest girl in the works, who had been trying, with great success, her admirers thought, to copy Mrs. Goodall.

“Ah, that’s all you look at, you young

"uns. Now I say she's right down nice," said an older woman, to whom Theo had talked for several minutes.

"Don't you like having all those people?" said Theo to Mr. Goodall as he walked back with her up the hill.

"I must have them, till I can get all the work done by machinery," said John. "No, I don't like them. Those girls especially are a rough lot."

"I thought some of them had such good faces," she said. "Machinery! That would be very uninteresting. And, besides, how would they all live?"

"That is an unpractical argument, you know, against machinery."

"I should like to have great works," said Theo after a minute, "and no machines at all. I should employ hundreds of people."

"I hope you would sell your goods."

"I should not care about that," said Theo.

John smiled patiently, and stroked his face. It was hard on a sensible man to have such a babyish companion.

"But I should sell them," she proceeded, "because they would be much better than other people's."

"Then you are going to create some new workpeople," said John.

"Of course they would want training," said Theo. "These things can't be done in a day. Ah, you are laughing at me! But if I could try something of the kind, you would see."

"I hope not, for I don't care to see failures," said John. "No; in every age the right plan is to use the materials that the age gives you; make the best of them, take care of them, but don't expect more than they can do. I dare say we fall rather short in the way of philanthropy. I think myself it is as well to leave them a good deal of independence. The vicar likes to do all he can, and he has started a club, and classes, and so forth. Of course I support him. A friend of mine, who has some large works a dozen miles from here, has made model arrangements for his workmen. I wonder if you would care to see them?"

"Very much indeed," said Theo.

"We will drive over when I have a free day—or would it be too long a ride for you?"

"No, certainly not. Aster and I would enjoy it of all things—only, there's Helen."

"It would not interest her," said Mr. Goodall.

Theo had not at all expected to find herself riding about the country with him. The September days were pleasant and

cool, and that ride to the model village proved to be only the first of many.

John did not profess to care much for riding; he was growing rather heavy, and walking suited him better; but he had a good strong horse, and riding with Theo was much more amusing than riding alone. Her fights with Aster, in which she always came off conqueror, though he had a strong will of his own, her grace and perfect riding, her thorough girlish delight in a gallop over the turf, the brightness that came to her spirits as the soft wind blew in her face and brought colour to it, her preposterous arguments, the smile with which she took John's good, solid contradictions, the disappearance of her dreaminess in this rapid movement and fresh air—all these things filled the worthy fellow with satisfaction.

Every day he grew more fond of Theo. And Helen, who used to watch them away from the door and go back peacefully to her sofa and her novel, knew that they would come in presently much more cheerful than they went, and would have a great deal to tell her—Theo, at least—of adventures on the way and the wonderful behaviour of the horses.

On other days Helen and Theo took long drives together, for the neighbourhood, like most of its kind, was both prettier and more sociable than they thought at first. There were people scattered here and there, and a cathedral town within fifteen miles; there were garden-parties, to which Mr. Goodall was generally too busy to go, so that the two cousins appeared at them together. Here they met a variety of people, who were all friendly, though most of them lived a long way off; but neither Helen nor Theo cared much for any of them, and they generally came back yawning from these festivities.

"I should like to be quite uncivilised, and to ride for miles and miles over a great plain," said Theo one evening, when John had been reproaching them for their unsociableness.

"And I should like to be left in peace," said Helen.

At the same time John noticed, when he went with them to any of these parties, that his wife and her cousin appeared perfectly happy, and were more agreeable, and had more to talk about, than any of the other people there. Under these circumstances it seemed wrong-headed of them to complain afterwards of being bored to extinction. He said so to Helen, but she only

laughed, and told him he did not understand.

They did not meet the Fanes anywhere; perhaps it was not likely that they should; yet Theo's eyes always wandered a little curiously round the rooms and lawns, and a sad, scornful sort of look came into her face when she saw they were not there. She often thought of the child Ada, with the pleading blue eyes which had touched her. It seemed hardly possible that she was not to see her or her brother again. It was a little humiliating to imagine what he must think of the strange woman who had told him she was fond of his sister, and then had lived on for weeks and weeks within two miles, without making the smallest attempt to see her again. What could he think? Theo puzzled herself about this very often, till she put up her two hands to her cheeks, and found they were burning with vexation. Yet she was not conscious of any wish to go away from Woodcote, and Helen was only too glad to keep her. Hugh wrote that he would be coming back from Scotland before long, and could stop at Woodcote and take her back to London. Of course that was very nice, and she would be very glad to see dear old Hugh again. But in the meanwhile, evening after evening, she looked out of her own high window to the sunset, and to a distant line of trees dark against the glow, often more or less obscured by smoke rising from the valley.

One evening a little thing happened, not important in itself, as far as Theo knew, though it brought a strange trouble into her mind, and she was never afterwards able to forget it.

October had come; the days were shortening fast, and it was quite twilight when she and Mr. Goodall were returning from one of their long rides. They had come along the high-road nearly as far as Deerhurst, when John suggested that by crossing a field or two they would cut off a corner, and come into the Woodcote lane much quicker than by going on to where it joined the road. There was a broad path across the field, and a rough stile used by the miners, many of whom made a short cut this way to the colliery. It was not, however, the direct pathway to the colliery from Deerhurst.

At this time in the evening no one was to be seen there; the marshy meadows,

the waste banks beyond, stretched out bare and dismal under a dim, cloudy sky.

The gate was not easy to unfasten, and Mr. Goodall was fumbling with it when a tall figure appeared suddenly out of the shadow of the hedge, having come up the road from Deerhurst, and a voice said:

"Let me do that for you."

"Much obliged; it is some dodge that I can't make out," said John. "Is it you, Fane? How are you? Getting on all right, I hope."

"All right, thank you," was the answer.

Mr. Fane's voice did not sound very cheerful, but he was stooping down at the gate. In a moment he had opened it for them to pass through.

Theo was quite close to him; he took off his hat, but hardly looked up. She stooped a little from her saddle and asked him how his sister was.

"She is very well, thank you," answered Gerald.

"Will you remember me to her?" said Theo, and she stooped a little more and held out her hand to him; she must have done it, if twenty Goodalls had been looking on.

He looked up then, and took her hand, and held it perhaps for a second or two longer than he ought. His own was as hot as fire, and trembled; but Theo only afterwards remembered the fate of her hand. At the moment she could see and feel nothing but the look that was fastened upon her; and she knew too that his face was very white and thin in the twilight, that he looked like a man with some terrible trouble upon him.

She made a sort of half exclamation; it was hardly possible not to ask him what was the matter; yet he had just now told Mr. Goodall that all was right with him.

At any rate she had no time, for all had passed like lightning; they had left him behind, with a cheerful "good-night" from John to comfort him, and Aster was cantering across the field. Theo looked back once, but the tall hedges cast a shadow, and the darkness was deepening; she could not see him.

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